ASAM

Today

Until the mid 70's, the Bell System relied primarily on internal measurments derived from service observing to determine the accuracy and courtesy of toll and directory assistance operators, business office service repersentatives, network repair clerks, etc. The system utilized random monitoring of customer contacts by special operators from remote locations. Approximately 300 customer contacts per month were observed for each unit or office. Errors or irregularities observed were calculated as service indices and summarized from office to Bell System levels.

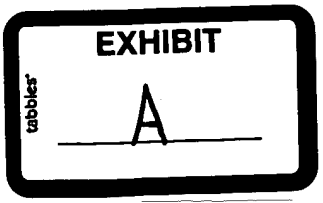
The system was a relative success in measuring technical aspects of the various jobs but was unable to measure the quality aspects of service from the customers perspective. Also increasing employee concerns of "monitoring" led to both union and legislative pressure to restrict or prohibit service observing.

Telephone Service Attitude Measurment (TELSAM) based on telephone interviews with customers was introduced to supplement internal measurments. Outside market research firms conducted the calls and summarized customer opinion as to percent satisfied, excellent and poor.

TELSAM provided some needed input from the customer to management but inherent problems prevented the system from being effective. For example, directory assistance and long distance operators work in large team configurations with three or more offices serving large NPA or state wide areas. Customer evaluations could be made for the complex but individual office or unit performance could not be determined. Results were never timely due to the lengthy process and the small sample size. In addition, the interview process was costly with each interview costing approximately $4.

Bell System divestiture has caused significant problems. TELSAM results were always 'suspect' due to customer confusion between toll and directory assistance. This problem is compounded with BOC's and AT&T both now having competing operators.

TELSAM samples were derived from customers that had recently used the service being evaluated. The source was billing tapes but the only information was a telephone number. The problem is that many people may utilized the same telephone. Another major problem is that for toll operators, there is not a telephone number to call the customer. For example, calls originating from coin telephones or hotel/motel were never sampled by TELSAM. This traffic is over 50% of the total volume.



Proposed

Automatic Service Attitude Measurment (ASAM) would utilize a digitized announcement and customer response/input system to measure customer opinion of operator courtesy, tone on service, accuracy and speed or promptness of service. The digitized announcement device coupled with a customer response recording system would be attached to directory assistance and toll operator access trunks. This connecting could be made at the distributing frames, the automatic call distributing (ACD) switch or the audio response unit (ARU) circuits.

The ASAM equipment would be programed to sample every Nth call. The unit could request a customer response for a single question or multiple questions. An ASAM feature would include a provision for customer comments for later management review. ASAM would summarize customer evaluations by numericaly keyed responses or by speech recognition. A screening circuit could allow samples of specific services such as international calls. A clock/calendar circuit would also permit service evaluations by business/evening classifications. Identification of incoming AT&T, MCI, or Sprint trunks would permit evaluation of service by carrier. A variable Nth sample size would make it possible to derive daily statistically valid service evaluations if desired. The ASAM real time on-line system would assure that the evaluation was in fact from a customer utilizing the service from that particular unit or office. The potential exists to measure the customers evaluation of an individual operator by utilizing a position or operator identification circuit.